

Michigan State Waterways Commission
Minutes of August 10, 2007

Regular Meeting
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Michigan State Waterways Commission
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Charlevoix City Hall, City Council Chambers
Charlevoix, Michigan

A regular meeting of the Michigan State Waterways Commission was called to order by Chairman Bryan Amann at 11:02 a.m. on Friday, August 10, 2007, at Charlevoix City Hall, City Council Chambers, Charlevoix, Michigan. The following Commissioners were present:

Bryan Amann, Chairman
Denny Bailey
Bob Brown
Curtis Hertel, Sr.
Janet Mansfield
Carol B. Oakley
Todd Wyett

Parks and Recreation Chief Ron Olson and other Department of Natural Resources (Department) staff were present.

On behalf of the Commission, Chairman Amann thanked former Commissioner John Winn and his wife, Zeta, for hosting a reception at their home. Chairman Amann also thanked City of Charlevoix staff for their hospitality and the use of the facility for the Commission meeting.

City of Charlevoix

The Michigan State Waterways Commission considered a resolution to honor the City of Charlevoix for upgrading and expanding its marina.

MOTION: Commissioner Todd Wyett moved to approve the resolution honoring the City of Charlevoix. Commissioner Janet Mansfield seconded the motion and it passed by acclamation.

A framed copy of the resolution was presented to the City of Charlevoix. Representatives from the City of Charlevoix thanked the Waterways Commission for its support and assistance.

Public Appearances

Written correspondence

There was no written correspondence.

Appearances (Non-agenda Items)

Mr. Jim Favors, a seasonal slip holder in Charlevoix, thanked the Commission, the City of Charlevoix, Mr. Hal Evans, and staff of the Charlevoix Marina for the investment in the marina. Mr. Favors opposes a lottery system for seasonal slip holders and believes the suggestion is ill-conceived. Mr. Favors also does not want the City of Charlevoix added to the Central Reservation System (CRS).

Mr. Brian Wagner, from the Rogers City Marina, addressed the Commission on behalf of Mayor Beach Hall. Rogers City has experienced a 40% drop in boater activity. The City is suggesting that, during tough times, the Department and Commission consider a program to allow facilities to apply for Waterways funding for maintenance and repairs.

Mr. Rich Giddens from Cadillac, Michigan is concerned about the suggestion to reduce the number of seasonal slips in Charlevoix. Mr. Giddens believes the number of seasonal slips should remain the same.

Discussion followed regarding seasonal slips in the Charlevoix area.

Minutes

June 15, 2007

MOTION: Commissioner Janet Mansfield moved to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2007 Michigan State Waterways Commission meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bob Brown and it carried unanimously.

Old Business:

Project Status Report

Mr. Paul Petersen provided an update on current projects as follows:

Marinas/Harbors:

- The project at Charlevoix Municipal Marina (Charlevoix County) includes new floating docks, a new harbormaster building, and is well under way.
- Ellias Cove (Wayne County) had a recent renaming ceremony. The site is a future harbor for transient boaters and was funded through a Federal grant. Commissioner Oakley attended the renaming ceremony. The site was one of the hottest spots in the United States prior to its cleanup.

Boating Access Sites (BAS):

- Sterling State Park BAS (Monroe County) is undergoing a dredging project.
- The project at Jordan Lake BAS (Barry Co) will clean up the parking area and take care of some drainage issues.

- Little Whitefish Lake BAS (Montcalm Co) recently completed a parking project.
- Sessions Lake BAS (Ionia County) has added additional parking.
- The project at Whites Bridge BAS (Ionia CO) included carry-down launch construction, parking, and barrier free access.
- The parking project at Whitmore Lake BAS (Livingston Co) has been completed.

Additional Updates

Mr. Bill Boik spoke to the Commission regarding several items:

- The Department has been working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) and the Village of Sebewaing as the USACOE will not be dredging there this year. This dredging project is included in the Department's Federal earmarks
- The permit for work at Leland was originally granted, but then held by the USACOE. The USACOE had previously stated it would allow the project, but deauthorize the harbor of refuge. Department staff met with USACOE, but is still waiting to hear how much encroachment will be allowed.
- The Forks BAS (Cheboygan County) is undergoing engineering work, but will go forward soon.
- The Mackinac Island (Mackinac County) project has been awarded and is moving forward.
- The work at Cheboygan Lock and Dam (Cheboygan County) is currently out for advertisement, which takes three weeks for advertisement. Bids are due September 25, 2007. It will then go to the State Administrative Board and the bid will be awarded on October 16, 2007.
- Phase III and IV of the Mackinaw City (Cheboygan County) project are going out for advertisement with a bid due date in late February 2008.
- The Lac LaBelle State Dock (Keweenaw County) has had a structural issue due to ice damage last year.
- The Waterways program is being audited. The audit should be completed in a month or so.
- The Commission and Department staff received an invitation to the dedication for the updated facilities in the City of St. Clair on August 18, 2007.

Operations Status Report

Mr. Harold Herta provided an update on operations as follows:

- With regard to CRS, slip reservations are up 5.3%; with reservation nights up 3.9%. Boating is doing better than camping this year.
- BAS permit sales overall (combining daily and annual) are up almost 20% through June.
- Nine new BAS have been added to the fee site category. The fee requirement has been added (66 designated sites) whether there is an attendant or not.
- Daily permit sales are up due to the addition of nine BAS that now require fees.

Update on the Portage Restaurant at Presque Isle

The Committee discussed the situation with the restaurant and the Department will develop a plan of approach. Chairman Amann stated that the Department and Commission cannot wait any longer and need to work something out quickly.

Mr. Jason Fleming provided an update on a few specific items:

Grayhaven Marina and Reid Ramp

A developer put in a fence at St. Jean Ramp (Reid ramp) effectively cutting the turning radius in half. The Department has entered into an agreement with the Attorney General's Office on Grayhaven Marina. A determination from Detroit's Law Department is due in October. The Attorney General's Office has also filed a restraining order.

Commissioner Hertel asked when the Marina ceased operation. This occurred in 2001. The City of Detroit did not have the ability to manage it. There has been ongoing concern over its ownership.

Inspections

Beginning in October the Commissioner will be provided with a list of facilities that have been inspected during the previous year. Staff intends to use this as an opportunity to recognize facilities that are doing well.

Standing Committee Reports (if any)

There was nothing further for this topic.

Walloon Lake Update

The Department has reviewed a proposal from Mr. Gene Thompson with the Walloon Lake Association. The Association has been told to go ahead. Mr. Thompson spoke to and he appreciates the Commission working with them to develop a facility other than in the State Forest. The cost of property (in Melrose Township) is \$485,000 with additional cost for landscaping. It is now the Association's job to raise the money through donations. Melrose Township will purchase the property. It has been a very long process, but he is very hopeful it will happen. The seller should sign the agreement today, with the Board signing at its upcoming meeting.

New Business

Blue Bikes

The Department would like to start a blue bike program next season. The Department is seeking support from the Commission for this project. Commissioner Wyett suggested speaking to Commission Brown about obtaining bikes.

MOTION: Commissioner Wyett moved to approve this resolution. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Oakley and it carried unanimously.

Grand Marais

Mr. Bill Bobier spoke to the Commission regarding Grand Marais, which is part of Burt Township. The harbor has existed since 1894 and is located between Whitefish Point and Munising. The breakwall is needed to protect Grand Marais Harbor from sediment. It has been neglected by the USACOE. The breakwall was gone by 1941. It is estimated that 104,000 cubic yards of sand enter harbor each year. Three boaters drowned in 2006 because the Coast Guard could not launch the rescue craft due to too much sand in the harbor. Mr. Bill Boik indicated that the Commission was given a timeline of the Department's work with Burt Township and is supportive all the way. This is one of the Department's Federal earmarks.

MOTION: Commissioner Wyett moved to approve the resolution of support for Grand Marais. Commissioner Denny Bailey seconded the motion and it was approved by acclamation.

City of Alpena's Marina Contract with Thunder Bay

Department staff reviewed the concession agreements between the City of Alpena and Thunder Bay. Grant-In-Aid facilities are required to bring these contracts before the Commission. Staff recommends support of the contract.

MOTION: Commissioner Mansfield moved to approve this resolution. Commissioner Oakley seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Proposed 2008 Rates

The new rates are generally presented at the August meeting; however, staff is still developing as they are trying to find a better way to set the rates. There have been a large number of variance requests so they are considering no longer looking at rate area, but rather circumstances to fit each to community. The facilities will be asked for input on the proposed new rates.

Additional Public Appearance

Mr. Gary Ziggler, a seasonal slip holder in Charlevoix, thanked the Commission and the City of Charlevoix for the decision on seasonal slips.

Strategic Planning Process Update

Mr. Ron Olson stated that more time will be allowed for comment cards. Staff is hoping to have the new strategic plan approved by May 2008.

Other Business:

MOTION: Commissioner Bailey moved to adjourn this meeting of the Michigan State Waterways Commission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown and unanimously approved.

This meeting of the Michigan State Waterways Commission was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.